

FROM WANAKA WITH LOVE, AN INNOVATIVE WORM FARM AND A HANDY NOTE-TAKING APP.
BY MATT PHILP

Wanaka to the world

BEN WILSON, FOUNDER and CEO of luxury sheepskin home wares company Wanaka Living can tell you the exact moment his brand was born. In Japan on a trip marketing traditional sheepskin products – “lovely fluffy things” – he saw his wares laid out directly alongside a synthetic product and struggled to spot any difference. “We’d

over processed and over engineered this natural product to such an extent that it looked perfect – and effectively synthetic.”

There’s nothing artificial looking about Wanaka Living’s range. Made from historically undervalued “curly skins” – at one time, farmers selling such lambs to the works were penalised – the rugs and cushions have all the functional properties of wool, but showcase the material in its

original form. “It’s all about preserving that natural character in the products, bringing more natural materials into our living spaces,” says Wilson, who adds that the product, while sold here, has been designed with the European and North American markets in mind. Hence the branding around Wanaka, where the company is based. “We get to enjoy this beautiful place every day, and the idea is that through this range, people offshore can bring a bit of Wanaka into their homes.”
wanakaliving.com

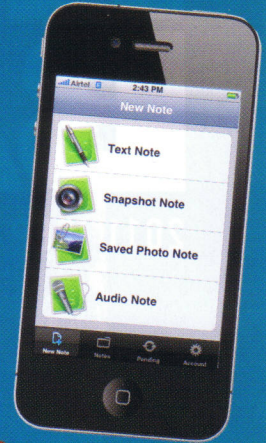
20 candles

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SABATINI. The Auckland luxury knitwear label turned 20 this year, a milestone in a fickle industry, and particularly cheerful news given that it continues to do all of its manufacturing at home – in Mt Roskill, to be precise. Managing director and designer Tony Milich founded Sabatini as an export-focused spinoff from Sonny Knitwear, the company his Croatian immigrant parents started in the 1950s. Australia is still the big market, with Sabatini supplying 160 accounts, against 50 at home. “Australia is still our great success story,” he says. sabatini.co.nz

LOVE AND COMPOST

IT’S A BUSINESS story that begins as a love story. Ben Bell, founder of Hungry Bin, the Auckland-based worm farm manufacturer, was moving in with his girlfriend. Only problem was that he was losing the worm farm, which belonged to his flat. He needed a new one, but “my attitude was ‘why should I buy one when I can make one?’” Years later, his experiments using wheelie bins have turned into an exciting business. Hungry Bin uses compression to create a cleaner, more user-friendly worm farm aimed at greenies and green thumbs alike – and Bell is talking to distributors in Australia, Argentina and Uruguay. hungrybin.co.nz

APPSWATCH



Evernote

We’re becoming increasingly dependent on this smart app. At its most basic it’s about note-taking – think agendas, speech notes, to-do lists. But its real talent lies in its unflappable cross-platform performance – we’ve got it syncing nicely across a Mac computer, an ancient PC and Android phone, so it’s wherever we are. It’s admirably flexible too (save photos, PDFs, audio, entire web pages), it’s easy to share notes with others and brilliant for travel (itineraries, maps, scanned documents). And check out the Trunk, full of useful – and fun – add-ons.



Photo: [unreadable]

